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University training programs for Peace Corps Volunteers have not been successful, due to the lack of definite prescriptions by the Peace Corps and of creative programing by the universities; but Samoa I, II, and III, run by the University of Hawaii, have developed a new approach which seems successful. Samoa I, based on Area Studies and Language instruction by Samoans, inadequately prepared the Volunteers for the realities of the Samoan social structure. In Samoa II, host-country nationals were used as discussion group leaders as well as language instructors; the program concluded with two weeks of transitional training in a simulated Samoan village. In Samoa III, 14 Volunteers spent the first three weeks living with Samoan families in the Nanakuli area on Oahu and were occupied with High Intensity Language Training under native Samoans. Cross Cultural Studies (instead of Area Studies) occupied the last nine weeks; feedback materials from Volunteers in the field were used and a much greater responsibility to provide conditions promoting "self-assessment" was assumed. It is recommended that groups be kept small, native Samoans be used as instructors, feedback be used, the cross cultural experience be continued, and original research materials be developed. (eb)

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COMING OF AGE IN SAMOA -- THE PEACE CORPS WAY

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DATELINE: AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

The final draft of this manuscript was mailed to Hilo from Auckland, New Zealand, where Dr. and Mrs. Pirie are spending his sabbatical from the University of Hawaii.

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ABSTRACT

Cross-Cultural preparation of Peace Corps Volunteers for entry into the culture of Western Samoa is the focus of this monograph. The experience gained in cross-cultural studies on three successive training projects forms the background of the discussion.

To enter another culture as a Peace Corps Volunteer is a unique experience without precedent, unlike that of any other group whose jobs take them abroad. Yet, the authors argue, neither the Peace Corps nor the universities are adequately equipped to prepare Volunteers for cross-cultural adaptation. The Peace Corps has not learned from its broad experience in this area, and the universities have not been creative in this important phase of human education.

Given the lack of background materials available, the authors set about to prepare Peace Corps trainees for their forthcoming experiences in Western Samoa. They describe the content, logistics, trainee attitudes, and the relations with instructors from Samoa, which define the first attempts at cross-cultural preparation in the Samoa I program. The program is thoroughly critiqued, and lessons for the future are discussed.

Having learned much from Samoa I, the authors describe how Samoa II was conducted. Among the topics discussed are: selection and training of Samoan instructors; the role of host-country nationals; "living" area studies; and some problems encountered. The program is then evaluated.

During the interim between Samoa II and Samoa III, the Area Studies Coordinators journeyed to Samoa and were able to do a follow-up study of Samoa II Volunteers in the field. They present their observations from the viewpoint of Volunteer adaptation to the Samoan culture.

The lessons they learned on this venture are discussed, and their effect on plans for Samoa III is aired.

With two training projects under their belts, and the revealing experiences in the field vividly affecting them, the authors set about to revamp for Samoa III. They describe the three phases of that program and its innovations. The relation of cross-cultural preparation to self-selection is discussed.

The monograph concludes with a summary of their findings, some conclusions, and some guidelines for the future. The results of this exploration can be generalized beyond Peace Corps.

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G L O S S A R Y

aiga.....the extended family unit

palagi.....a foreigner (usually white)

pisikoa.....Samoan corruption of "Peace Corps"

umu.....Samoan ground oven

CONTENTS

I. PROLOGUE

This paper traces the evolution, over three programs, of that component of training concerned with the cross-cultural preparation of Volunteers going to Western Samoa. It is probably inevitable that the setting-up of programs which perform this task adequately can be achieved only by trial and error. But we wonder if this maturing period need be as painful and as protracted as it often is. The evolution of our changing approach to these programs, stored in that recently founded institution, the Peace Corps Memory, (Crowley 1968, 3-8) may assist in the continuing improvement of the Samoa programs. Further, it may possibly be used to accelerate the adolescent period in the development of programs for areas not yet served by Peace Corps.

II. THE PEACE CORPS AND THE UNIVERSITIES

The performance of the various universities which have accepted training contracts has been criticised by Peace Corps/Washington. The present director, Mr. Jack Vaughn, for instance, in a recent article (Vaughn 1968, 12-14) complained that, although given every opportunity and freedom, the universities had failed to come up with imaginative innovations in Volunteer training, but had continued to rely on traditional methods of instruction and evaluation. We have to accept this criticism as valid but, at the same time, may wonder why it has been so, particularly in regard to cross-cultural training. University faculty have few more useful things to do than to exercise their creative imaginations on problems of this type.

Some obvious reasons for the disinterest lie in the occasional, precarious and erratic nature of employment on Peace Corps training staffs. The work is usually accorded low academic status within the university. Many staff develop the uncomfortable feeling that they are caught in a no-man's-land of misunderstanding between the two institutions. Some are disinclined to be subject, not only to the administrative vagaries of a university to which experience may or may not have inured them, but also to the sometimes alarming and inexplicable practices of one of the more tumultuous agencies of the U. S. Government.

Nevertheless, there have been some who have been prepared, for the sake of the ideal, the money or the supposed good of the Volunteers, to persist with Peace Corps training projects.

Less obvious reasons for the unsatisfactory performance lie in the nature of the task the universities have been set. Peace Corps has never

prescribed in detail what they thought was needed, and one may assume that this is mainly because they did not really know. Worse, they have never set up adequate machinery by which they might find out. It is likely that the universities would have been reluctant to accept more precise direction, but our experience suggests that much more thought and work needs to be applied to this problem, and that the responsibility to initiate and provide for this should lie with the Peace Corps.

Within a university, the obvious thing to do, presented with a room full of people who look like students, even if they do appear to be on holiday, is to present them with the usual distillation of existing knowledge on the topic requested, reinforced by access to additional data if they are keen to develop the topic for themselves. Deservedly, such an approach was vigorously rejected by the Volunteers. They were not sure what they wanted, but they knew they did not need this. Nor did they, as they soon discovered in-country.

The fact is that the kind of data needed to prepare Volunteers for the kinds of experience they will encounter moving into any specific culture, at the level prescribed for a PCV, is normally not in existence. No group in the past has moved in to live within another culture in this fashion; not the first castaways or beachcombers, nor the missionaries, nor the modern anthropologist. The Peace Corps Volunteer is a pioneer in this type of cross-cultural confrontation. There is little available of precedent or guidance to assist him. Where materials do exist, few academics could recognize it as such, or know how to present it to Peace Corps Volunteers in a form they could use.

The only useful programs are specific to the culture into which the Volunteers are to move, and also specific to the needs of the Volunteers once they get there. The preparation of such a program requires field experience and observation, with sufficient lead-time to digest and integrate the findings. A program along these lines might include first-hand observations made of the interaction between the PCVs and the host culture, and aspects of the culture which impinge particularly on the life and work of the Volunteers. Two areas in which data are seriously deficient, in Samoa for instance, are psychology and sociology. Feedback (that is, data derived from the Volunteers and from the people of the host-country with whom they are in close contact) should also be utilized.

The first group of Volunteers would necessarily go in without this desirable background, and their status as "guinea pigs" should lead to the expectation that their numbers will be small.

The failure of the Peace Corps to specify this kind of preparation for their Volunteers, their lack of appreciation of the need for specificity relating to each culture contact situation, is the root of their Volunteer training problems (and also many of their in-country problems, a topic we need not further expose here). Degrees of success or failure so far are related much more to the configuration of the cultures receiving Volunteers than to anything over which the Peace Corps has had much control. A more directed, culture-specific approach would take patience, time and money, commodities which, in that order, are in shortest supply in the Peace Corps. But such an approach would pay off in observable results and in the regard in which the institution is held by the people of the host countries.

III. PREPARATION FOR FIELD EXPERIENCES BY AREA STUDIES

Since the inception of Peace Corps training programs, the Area Studies component, although surviving, has never received adequate definition of its role -- this in spite of the fact that the most frequent cause of failure and return among Volunteers has been their inability to contend with the local culture. The role of Area Studies has received a wide variety of interpretations in different programs, but it is possible to extract some recurring themes.

(1) The "a little knowledge is a useful thing" approach.

To prepare trainees to meet with knowledge and confidence the cultural group to which they are assigned. This will lessen the period and severity of "culture shock" and allow the Volunteers to be more effective initially. This is a very common aim of training, and characterizes our first two programs (Samoa I and II) to a large degree. It is essentially of short-term benefit, in that its value to the trainees is concentrated in the first few months of their in-country experience.

(2) The "production of the universal volunteer" approach.

To develop a "Peace Corps Man" -- a "beautiful American," self-reliant, durable, able to take what comes, to roll with the punches, be flexible, emotionally stable, and at the same time to heighten the appreciation of the ideals of American democracy which prompted the Volunteer to come forward in the first place. The content of Area Studies in

these programs may be quite formal and academic, as the main thrust of training is in other parts of the program. However impressive the products of this type of training are to their fellow Americans, without compensating qualities, (which many of them, fortunately, have) they usually appear obnoxious and ignorant to the inhabitants of their host-country.[1]

(3) The "instant social scientist" approach.

To assist Volunteers to develop for themselves an intellectual framework or body of theory, derived mainly from the social sciences, which would enable them to absorb and interpret their observations and experiences and put them in good use in their daily dealings with the people of their host-country. This should perhaps be the ideal of training. To our knowledge it has never been tried successfully. Its disadvantages are the complexity of such training; that it would be difficult to accomplish in a 12-week training period, particularly with Volunteers of different backgrounds; and that it puts intellectual and emotional demands on Volunteers which are apt to prove excessive.

(4) The "culture-specific" approach.

To bring the Volunteers to the state of perceiving the culture for which they are being prepared -- and to do this realistically, and in relation to what they know of

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[1] That the Peace Corps has a tendency to assume the "universal volunteer" concept has been pointed out in the context of assessment. (Fitzgerald, E. T., Vol. 1, No. 3, trends, p. 3).

their own capabilities. Included in the training will be situations of culture contact, actual or well simulated. In this way the Volunteers will be able to test themselves, their knowledge and their ability to adapt against the pressures and problems of actual cross-cultural experience before committing themselves to the field. The advantages of self-selection before the Volunteer moves in-country are so great as to make this the most useful approach so far discovered for cross-cultural studies.[2]

(5) The "in-country training" approach.

This method is gaining favor with Peace Corps, and in-country training obviously has much to recommend it, principally the ease with which culture-specific experiences may be utilized. We have had no experience with this method and are therefore unable to anticipate what disastrous possibilities lie therein, or what benefits such a program might be made to confer. Because of the difficulties inherent in training and subsequently working, both in the same population, the method would seem to have limited usefulness in very small countries such as Western Samoa.

Against these various possibilities we shall now examine the nature of the programs in the three Samoa training projects.

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[2] And the culture-specific approach is important to assessment, too. (See Vol. 1, No. 3, trends.)

IV. SAMOA I: AREA STUDIES

Samoa I was organized, as usual, on short notice and very hastily. It was to be held on the Hoolehua site on Molokai and to provide initially for 107 trainees. This group was to be trained along with a group of 46 trainees destined for Tonga. A very adequate library on Samoa was accumulated, and a structural outline was drawn up to cover those aspects of history, geography and the social sciences on which data for Samoa were available. Speakers were recruited to cover important areas. Panels of experts were organized to discuss some topics. We were able to assemble a high proportion of all the research workers recently active in Samoa. Several Samoans were asked to participate as resource persons. Additional speakers included some brought specifically from Samoa, and even one, a part-Samoan economist, from Australia. The coordinator was experienced in the area and had published several works on Samoa.

However promising this looked on paper, the end result was judged as less than inspiring, particularly by the Volunteers. The major problems were concerned with scheduling, coherence, continuity and legitimacy. Although the sequence emerged more intact than might have been expected, the problem of fitting speaker availability into the academic structure of the program and the needs of other parts of the training, proved a constant worry. That most instructors had to be flown into Molokai produced a series of cliff-hanging crises, as planes were delayed or missed or flew at times which were inappropriate. Sequences which appeared to be perfectly logical to the coordinators proved baffling to the trainees, who often failed to see a connection between the different parts. The disparate background preparation of

the trainees was also a problem. While some were perfectly at home with the various conventions, structures and vocabulary of the different disciplines, others soon became lost. The program as a whole suffered from being spasmodic and uneven. Teaching was usually done to large classes in long time-blocks, under poor conditions for both teacher and trainee. Because language-learning obviously requires fresh, keen minds, Area Studies was often scheduled at times when minds were not so keen -- drugged by fatigue or a recent lunch.

The most startling problem, however, proved to be legitimacy. The trainees soon developed a loyalty to their intended host-country. Since, on the same site, this could be either Samoa or Tonga, rivalries soon emerged. The Samoans with whom the Volunteers were in the closest contact were their language instructors, and the information and impressions gained from them seemed more relevant and potentially useful than those from the visiting Area Studies instructors. The fact that few of the language instructors had been in Samoa for several years, that most were American Samoans, that they were Mormons, a culturally aberrant group even in Samoa, was overlooked by most trainees. On the whole, they reinforced trainee expectations of Samoa as a tropical island paradise. Information on the less attractive aspects of Samoan life and manners discussed by Area Studies instructors was resisted and, after checking with their Samoan contacts, frequently disbelieved or rejected. The result was that very few trainees were prepared to face the problems and stresses of cross-cultural experience, or in many cases realized that there would be any. Their expectations of their Samoan experience were usually very high. The situation is a familiar one in Peace Corps training. (See Szanton, 1966, 36-7.)

V. REAPPRAISING FOR SAMOA II

Dissatisfaction with the way Samoa I was working led to an "agonizing reappraisal" of the plans for Samoa II. The principal innovation, intended to avoid most of the faults noted in Samoa I Area Studies, was to use "host-country nationals," Samoans, to assume the principal load in Area Studies teaching.

Other components of Peace Corps training programs have customarily used host-country nationals, but only in highly structured situations such as language teaching. Where these instructors have been used in a dual role, devoting some additional time to Area Studies, the results have not been very good. The preparation of an instructor for Cross-Cultural Studies must be different, and a higher level of education is necessary. Each is a full-time job requiring careful, and different, training. For Samoa II Area Studies, it was decided to use Samoan teachers leading small-discussion groups as the core of the whole program.

The Peace Corps representatives in Western Samoa were asked to feel out the possibilities of recruiting suitable instructors. The prescription was a demanding one:

--They should be young -- within the age range of the trainees themselves, or only slightly older.

--They required overseas tertiary education, since they would need to hold their own intellectually and educationally with the trainees.

--Their education should have equipped them to handle materials in the social sciences, geography and history.

--They would obviously need to be personable, but more important, to be able to deal with their material objectively, and be themselves progressive, but still representative of their culture.

Such persons, we felt, would be able to present a realistic view of their own country -- and they would be believed. Difficult as such persons are to find, to persuade their government to dispense with them for three months could have been even more difficult. On this occasion the Samoan Government released two employees of the Education Department who exactly filled our prescription. Another Samoan, from the Department of Agriculture, was recruited, with the permission of the Government, from the East-West Center, where he had recently completed, on scholarship, a degree in Tropical Agriculture at the University of Hawaii.

It was proposed to give the instructors at least two weeks of preparatory training. During this time they would have the opportunity to adjust to their new surroundings, to become acquainted with the structure and methods of their job, and begin the task of reading and evaluating the collected literature on Samoa. This aspect, considered essential by the coordinator, did not work out well, as the two recruited from Samoa did not arrive until the day before Samoa II began. Work done with the locally available instructor demonstrated its worth, as he was able to handle materials which the others found difficult.

To assist and coordinate the three Samoan instructors and to arrange their day-to-day program and assignments, a supervising instructor was appointed. She had spent two years in Samoa and was known to the

instructors beforehand. Her main job, it was proposed, would be to arrange each week's work -- to sort out and prepare materials for the week's topics, to go over these with the instructors to ensure that they were understood and their significance appreciated, to prescribe readings, and to make sure that these were available to the trainees.

In practice her main job was to interpret and explain the program and the activities of the administration to the Samoans, to protect them from discrimination, to soothe their ruffled feelings, and to keep them at peace and working when difficult or competitive situations arose. In this way the importance of specific experience in cross-cultural contact was impressed upon her most forcefully.

The primary role of the Samoan instructors was to lead group discussions. They were required to meet with each of three groups, of approximately 12 trainees, for one hour each working day. In addition to these three consecutive hours spent actually leading discussions during the middle of the day, an approximately equal time was required for the preparation of the material. This regular routine was periodically suspended when it was felt that a guest-lecturer would be more effective in covering a particular topic. On several occasions the instructors combined with guest-lecturers to form discussion panels.

In addition to their primary role as group-discussion leaders, the influence of the Samoan instructors pervaded many other aspects of the program, usually in a beneficial way. They were critical of the form of Samoan language being taught, and their attitude led to revisions in the language programs for Samoa II, but more particularly for Samoa III. The Technical Studies Teacher Training component benefited from the presence of the two instructors from the Western

Samoa Department of Education. They served as resource-persons to illustrate some of the ways in which the Samoan education system differs from the American, and pointed up differences in teacher-pupil relationships which would otherwise have been ignored or misunderstood.

The final two weeks of the program were devoted to transitional training at the Puko'o site, which simulated a Samoan village as closely as possible. This period was in effect one of "living Area Studies," with the Samoans largely in control. They played a leading role, acting as family heads, each in charge of an aiga or extended family, interpreting and directing trainee behavior from a Samoan perspective. The legitimacy of this type of training was due primarily to the leading role played by the Samoans. Their presence was essential, as the trainees would otherwise have questioned the value and pertinence of this training to their future roles in Samoa. This period, although at the end of a taxing three months for all concerned, was accepted as relevant and as a valuable preliminary to life in Samoa.

Samoa II ended bathed in the sweet smell of success, which even the stench of overflowing waterseal toilets and offal from the final feast of fowl and pig cooked by the trainees in the Samoan umu (but without the Samoan custom of cleaning up afterwards) could overpower. Those in a position to compare, thought it a marked improvement on Samoa I. The Area Studies component had played a more important part in the program as a whole, contributing significantly to the Assessment program, and generally bringing the whole of training "nearer" to Samoa.

VI. FOLLOWING UP IN THE FIELD

The Area Studies coordinators began the preparations for a well-earned rest and change of scene -- a summer of academic field-work in Western Samoa. Our euphoria was short-lived; our comeuppance occurred in the streets of Apia where, for instance, one of the more intelligent and sensitive trainees told us, very nicely, that our training had been "a painful lie by omission." Many echoed him less eloquently. Several had already gone home.

The trainees we observed and talked to in Western Samoa painted a picture of Samoan life, culture and teaching practices that were virtually new to us. We had not, they said, portrayed Samoa as it really is: its sameness, once the glow of introduction is past, its smallness, its monotony, its relentless lack of privacy or solitude -- or its loneliness. Samoans did not really need Peace Corps they said. Samoan children were rowdy, undisciplined and unwilling to learn. There was opposition to improvement or any change. We listened to a collective scream of agony from young American college graduates as they tried to fit themselves into Samoan life -- into a culture that they came to recognize as the direct opposite of their own in almost every way.

It seemed to us that, to put it mildly, a new approach was needed. We had not realized that the Volunteers, for the most part well-educated, independent, mobile, questioning, metropolitan people, but with backgrounds limited mainly to school and university, would find it so difficult to adapt to the Samoa that we knew. Although for most of them a first-year's job experience in a small town or rural environment, away from home and/or university for the first time, would have

been difficult and frustrating, the majority were having domestic and job problems of a magnitude which astounded us. Many had been subjected to a lack of hospitality and respect from Samoans which we would never have anticipated from our own experience. But then, even as young research-students we had been privileged, even honored guests, during our village work. The Volunteers had been presented to the Samoan villagers as something different, on their own level, without palagi status, to be treated as one of the family...in a word, defenseless. Without the manipulative and verbal weapons which Samoans have developed to protect themselves in the aiga situation, learned from birth the hard way, the naive, well-meaning, "flexible" Volunteers could be expected to fare badly.

The children in school -- truculent and undisciplined, not inclined to learn or to take their Peace Corps teachers at all seriously -- did not match the docile, polite, earnest and hard-working students we had been accustomed to in Western Samoa. Even allowing for a little cultural change, and possibly the effects of recent Independence, it did not seem that the children in the schools could be of the same stock as those we had seen at Samoa College, not too many years before. But the students at Samoa College are still like that -- an elite group, highly selected and already honored by their future status as persons in paid employment. Most students in the schools where PCVs are located are there because the only alternative is work on the family land. They do not really believe that any schooling is needed for that life. If one goes to school, for the status, the teachers should be from the local Teachers' College, back from scholarship training in New Zealand, or even if

one is lucky, a real palagi, someone who has some clout, someone with prestige to dispense, not just a pisikoa.

There are other aspects of their social organization which many Volunteers found a constant and unexpected source of distress. One was the constant maneuvering and intrigue which pervades Samoan life, particularly among males. This is a result of the need for anyone with any pretensions toward improving his status to establish and constantly reinforce his position, while if possible undermining the position of his competitors (Gilson, 1963). Another is their ambivalent attitude toward things economic as simultaneously desirable and embarrassing, so well described by F. and V. Ala'ilima. Some aspects which impinged so heavily upon the daily life of the PCVs have been professionally analyzed and described, but many others have not. Even in the case of economic values, the Ala'ilimas' paper describes a process of discovery, over many years, of what forces were ranged against them in their efforts to interest their village in economic development.

Describing himself, Vaiao Ala'ilima writes,

> He was in an ideal position to communicate his thought. He had known these people from birth. He spoke their language. He held one of the 15 village chiefly titles, and he had the added status of an overseas education. He had sufficient savings to give a practical demonstration of his point by clearing a planting of his own in an untouched area of the rainforest. Government agriculture and cooperatives officers were anxious to assist him with technical advice. How could he possibly fail?

He might have added intelligence and a Master's degree to his own list of advantages, and also a wife with a Ph.D. in a social science from one of the United States' most distinguished universities. But fail they did. Techniques to ensure the success of Western enterprises in Samoa are not yet formulated.

Some PCVs were apparently happy, well adjusted to their domestic and job situations, and effective in their work. Frequently this seemed to be a matter of good fortune. Sometimes they had come under the sponsorship or protective friendship of a Samoan who was interested in the possibilities they offered. Sometimes Volunteers blossomed with qualities or resources which had not appeared in training. In many cases of success the Volunteers were atypical: those who had had no family may have appreciated the opportunity to be "adopted," or those who came from large, often poor families which had accustomed them to the obligations of group living. In a few cases an unfortunate background had led the Volunteer to expect life to be rough so that Samoa held no surprises.

VII. SOME LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

We attempted to draw lessons for future programs from our observations of Volunteers in the field. Overall, it appeared that for Samoa I the Area Studies program had scarcely reached them, so that they arrived in Samoa with their own images, whatever they were, almost intact. The Volunteers of Samoa II had arrived expecting to understand, feeling that they were well informed, but with their expectations high and their favorable stereotypes modified rather than destroyed. On both groups, reality fell like a ton of dirt, heavier perhaps on Samoa II, since their expectations were more precise. This is summed up by the statement of one Volunteer, banal were it not so plaintive,

"You didn't tell us it was a <u>real place</u>!"

It appeared that while we had solved many of the problems of format and method noted in the Samoa I program, there were still grave deficiencies in the content and materials available to Samoa II. Worse, we had not presented the trainees with a situation which would bring them to consider the realities of living in Samoa, with Samoans. They had never been encouraged to assess themselves against what they could perceive would be their lot in Samoa. The two-week transitional training of Samoa II had been useful, but its faults were that it was too short, and that it was tacked on at the end of training, too late to do its job adequately -- that of turning the Volunteers' minds away from merely "beating Assessment" to the more fimdamental task of judging themselves. Also it grouped the Volunteers and allowed them to play-act as a Samoan family. What they needed was some experience as individuals, as one <u>palagi</u> alone, living in a Samoan situation.

There were some obvious lessons in this "feedback" for the organizing of Area Studies for Samoa III. Some of the problems presented were formidable, and some of the difficulties of the Volunteers seemed to be beyond the help that any training program could provide.

VIII. REVAMPING FOR SAMOA III

It was decided to retain the concept of using Samoan instructors as the core of the teaching staff. Whatever virtues training for Samoa II had over Samoa I were largely due to this innovation, and it has obvious value if suitable instructors can be obtained and properly handled. Prospective instructors were sought and recruited. On this occasion the Department of Education showed itself quite unwilling to allow members of its staff to be recruited on their merits as perceived by Peace Corps or the training program staff. They reserved to themselves the right to select and decide who was to be provided, not only for the Area Studies staff but even for the Language program. The possibilities were anticipated by us with misgiving.

Several other circumstances, however, greatly assisted the planning and execution of Samoa III. The first of these was the small number of Volunteers in the program (beginning at 23 and reducing to 14 by the end). The second was the selection of the Puko'o site on the beach 20 miles from Kaunakakai -- a training location with a strong physical resemblance to a Samoan village. The reduced number of trainees meant that only one Area Studies instructor was necessary. The choice proved to be excellent: a district high school principal, in his thirties, with some experience of his own with Peace Corps Volunteers, well educated, with overseas experience, well connected in Samoa and, above all, truly bi-cultural. This latter quality, that of being able to discern which culture is which, and to be at ease in both, is extremely rare. It was invaluable on the training site.

The Volunteers were to move into the Nanakuli area on Oahu for three weeks to live with Samoan families resident there, and to teach in the local schools which are famous for their discipline problems. This was possible because of the willingness of the Nanakuli Samoans to cooperate with the Peace Corps Training Project, and the small number of trainees involved.

The component was renamed "Cross-Cultural Studies," rather than Area Studies, to reflect a new emphasis. A greater stress was to be placed on materials which would prepare trainees to meet actual living and working conditions in Samoa. Feedback materials from Volunteers in the field were to be used.

A much greater responsibility to provide conditions promoting "self-assessment" was assumed by Cross-Cultural Studies in Samoa III than in previous programs. A high degree of coordination with Assessment was required, and both components were adjusted to provide this. An unanticipated bonus was derived from the Language program, which for the first time was using instructors from Western Samoa rather than Samoans available locally. These instructors were selected from primary school principals in the Western Samoan Department of Education. The criteria seemed to be that they should be respected, well-established officers in the department who could be relied upon to provide a dignified and conservative image of their culture. In this they were remarkably successful. While some trainees were brought to the conclusion that their own personalities and that of Samoa were not about to mix easily, and resigned, the remainder were assisted in acquiring an early understanding of what the job of teaching in Western Samoa would probably

hold for them. In all, the presence of the Samoans provided an object lesson in cross-cultural contact which we utilized gratefully.

In practice the Cross-Cultural Studies program for Samoa III worked out as planned, and in some respects exceeded our expectations. Since the first three weeks of the 12 were entirely occupied with High Intensity Language Training (HILT), the Cross-Cultural Studies program lasted only nine weeks. This time was divided into three periods. The first three weeks were focused on the individual Volunteer living and working within the context of Samoan culture, and included, for instance, material on the Samoan personality, case studies on the adjustment problems of Volunteers already in the field. The second period was devoted entirely to the individual cross-cultural experience of living in a Samoan family in Nanakuli, Oahu. The final three weeks were utilized to give the Volunteers a broader overall view of Western Samoa, its culture, institutions and development problems, particularly those which would impinge upon the lives of Peace Corps Volunteers. The program was made as relevant to Peace Corps needs and as specific to Western Samoa as presently possible -- given what we know of each.

IX. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The accumulation of experience of the three programs permits some generalizations concerning the advantages and disadvantages of the type of program finally evolved. Some suggestions for future programs also occur to us. More would no doubt come as a result of a further visit to Western Samoa to observe the products of Samoa III at work.

(1). The use of Samoan instructors of the type used in Samoa II and III should be retained. They must be very carefully selected as the quality of the whole Cross-Cultural Studies program depends largely on their quality. Suitable persons are very difficult to find. They should be treated within the program with the consideration due to them as leaders in their own country. With this should go tact, generosity, fairness, honesty and lack of any suggestion of discrimination. It is difficult to say that, within a University-Peace Corps organization, this has not always been the case in past programs -- but it must be said.

In addition to the advantages of coherence and authenticity already discussed, the presence of instructors from Western Samoa confers other benefits, some not anticipated. Their contribution to the social life of the camp, and the recreational possibilities, was very large. Informal interaction between the Samoans and the trainees probably contributed as much validly useful material and experience as the formal part of the program. Many close friendships were formed, and conversations about Samoa went on long into the night. The Samoans were active participants in trainee social functions, both organized and informal.

Relationships formed by host-country nationals and trainees will carry on into the field after the trainees become newly arrived Volunteers. Although this can be a comforting friendship to the Volunteer, particularly in the initial adjustment period, experience with the Samoa II Volunteers pointed to some dangers which can be minimized in training. Back home the instructors of Samoa II were somewhat overwhelmed by the number of Volunteers who came to them for comfort and advice. Some came to demand why they had not been warned of the difficulties and frustrations awaiting them. The instructors of Samoa II were careful to warn for Samoa III of the dangers of misrepresentation or omission, however innocent or well-meant. Trainees should be warned in training that too great an association with the palagi or his institutions can have a high cost to a Samoan among his fellows. Nor can they assume that a Samoan will feel as free in his expression or actions in Samoa as he was on Molokai.

There are some problems associated with the use of Samoan instructors. These largely stem from the obvious fact that they will bring their own culture with them. Although a PCV will have 12 weeks training before going into Samoa, a Samoan instructor is expected to perform in a foreign setting with no special preparation whatsoever.

The Samoan concern with status, his own in relation to other Samoans particularly, must always be remembered. This need of the Samoan to establish and reinforce status in competition with his fellows can be a very disruptive influence if not recognized and handled knowledgeably.

(2). The Nanakuli phase with its individual cross-cultural experience was invaluable to both Volunteers and staff, and efforts should be made to repeat it in all future programs. Relations with the Nanakuli Samoans should be carefully nutured.

(3). Future training programs should be kept small -- 40 trainees to start should be the maximum. One of the main enemies of a personal encounter with the problems of cross-cultural living by trainees is their tendency to form, where the group is large, a culture of their own. Such a group will absorb the energies and interests of the Volunteers, and distract them from the true purposes of training -- particularly in shielding them from the need to assess themselves against the demands, realistically perceived, of the culture for which they are being prepared. Smaller, more frequent programs would allow better continuity of staffing and administration, and lessen the need to begin anew each program. The cost benefits of large programs are illusory; these programs are not effective and frequently are even destructive of the purposes for which they are designed.

(4). It is significant, too, that Samoa III made few if any enemies for the Peace Corps. This was not characteristic of the two previous programs. If they were representative, and we think they are, Peace Corps has created a legion of the disgruntled, the humiliated and the antagonistic which is already large enough. We believe that small, thoughtfully prepared, smoothly administered training projects pervaded by the concepts of culture-specificity and trainee self-assessment will not only assist in the morale and understanding of those trainees who go into their assigned countries, but also those who do not. In this connection, it is worthwhile noting that although training programs are contracted out, in this case to the University of Hawaii, when things do not go right for the trainees or the staff from the host-country, it is the Peace Corps which gets the blame when this is assigned.

(5). Future programs should utilize quite intensively feedback materials from Volunteers in the field. These are invaluable sources for training use. They should come only from the country intended for the Volunteers, should be recent, and if possible they should give a balanced, fair picture. There are some potential hazards in their use. Those used in Samoa III were uniformly negative. Many were very strong material indeed. Were they to fall into hostile hands, the repercussions could easily match those of the innocently dropped Nigerian postcard.[3] Some methods must be evolved whereby this material can be used in training usefully, but without the risk of their contents being misused, or causing pain or anger among the Samoan instructors. This was achieved in Samoa III, but we depended on the forebearance and detachment of our instructor. It should also be useful to gather some feedback materials from Samoans who have been in close contact with PCVs.

(6). Some serious thought should be given to the development of original research materials commissioned by Peace Corps specifically for their training needs. There are many aspects of Samoan society, social organization, psychology and attitudes to politics and education (to name but a few) about which little is known or published in a form useful in Peace Corps training. Such material needs to be collected, interpreted and presented by professional social scientists in a form

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[3] This occurred during the first year of Peace Corps, when PCV Margery Michelmore included certain candid observations in a postcard intended for the folks back home. Somehow it came into the hands of certain students of the University College at Ibadan, Nigeria, who reprinted and distributed it throughout the University. A student rally was called and the Peace Corps denounced. Before the press had finished with the incident, the postcard was literally read around the world.

which can be used directly in training or planning. We know that it would have been very desirable to have had this done and digested, before any Volunteers went into Western Samoa. Such an approach could be used to improve the quality of Peace Corps programs and the training of Volunteers before they come into contact with other cultures; it would greatly reduce cross-cultural blunders and misunderstandings.

(7). That most of the staff of Samoa III, from the director down, had some personal experience in Western Samoa was of great benefit to the program. This common background allowed a fusing of different parts of the program into a coherent and integrated whole to be achieved in a very useful fashion. The only component lacking first-hand Samoan experience was Assessment. This was keenly felt by the Assessment Officer, who endeavored to compensate for it as much as possible. Since self-assessment dominated this part of the program, the deficiency was minimized. Better understanding of the problems of Volunteers in Samoa, which can only be gained from the first-hand experience of a trained professional, would have allowed Assessment to contribute more to the Volunteers striving to understand their own suitability for the job ahead. It is of little use preparing Volunteers on a culture-specific basis if the standards by which they are assessed bear no relation to the demands the culture will place on them.

There is little doubt that Western Samoa provides more difficult and complex obstacles to the easy assimilation of Peace Corps Volunteers living with families than have many other cultures -- even Tonga, also Polynesian and only a few hundred miles away.

One of the best and most accessible books on the Pacific might have warned those making the decision to commit Peace Corps to the area,

> ...more of white man's hopes and intentions -- good and bad--have been wrecked on this Polynesian archipelago than on any other island group in the Pacific. The Samoans, sitting cross-legged on their fine mats and whisking flies off their brown torsos, may well chuckle at the hundred-year impasse that they have constructed against the pale and puny outsiders. These inhabitants of the islands of Savai'i, Upolu, Tutuila, and Manua have driven foreign governments almost to war with one another; they have ruined official reputations, forced planters and traders into bankruptcy, and divided the white settlers into hostile camps -- all this just by remaining Samoan. (Oliver, 1961, 210.)

It has taken three programs and some in-country observation of Volunteers' problems, in addition to our considerable prior experience in the culture, for us to begin to know how Peace Corps Volunteers should be trained for Western Samoa. We have no doubt that the future holds some surprises for us still. One area of mystification still bothers us. How do the programs for other countries fare? Why, after eight years of Peace Corps training programs, should we, and our Volunteers, have to find out the long hard way? Could our perience not be merged with the experience of others doing the same job to produce some guidance for future coordinators concerned with preparing Peace Corps Volunteers to brave their cross-cultural problems? There is no doubt that this area is presently the weakest part of Peace Corps training, and that Volunteers in the field are paying dearly for this continued neglect.

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